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SUBJECT: JERUSALEM MEDIA REACTION (01/20): Israeli authorities level
a large area of land on university grounds in East Jerusalem

Main Stories:

Independent daily Al-Quds leads with news that the Israeli
authorities leveled a large area of land on the grounds of Al-Quds
University in Beit-Hanina yesterday in preparation for a new bypass
road that connects the Neveh Yacov and Pisgat Ze'ev settlements with
road 443. Al-Quds University issued a press release yesterday
condemning the Israeli aggression against its land.

The dailies continue to highlight the crisis in Gaza as a result of
the floods over the weekend. Israel is blamed for causing the
flooding after opening the dams in Gaza, which injured a number of
Palestinians and destroyed more than 70 houses.

Al-Quds front pages news citing a senior Israeli official saying
that the recent settlement activities in East Jerusalem, including
the construction of 692 housing units for Jewish residents, were
done with the knowledge and coordination of the US government. The
report also notes that the White House was consulted about the
timing and the announcement.

The dailies report on the Head of European Commission in Jerusalem
Christian Burger and PA Prime Minister Salam Fayyad signing a new
financial agreement yesterday to support the Palestinian Authority
worth 158.5 million Euros.

PA official daily Al-Hayat Al-Jadida, citing the Egyptian daily
Al-Masriyoun, reports that high ranking Egyptian officials will
visit Tel Aviv in the coming days to discuss the Israeli conditions
and "obstacles" regarding the prisoner exchange deal.

Independent daily Al-Ayyam front pages news on Mouhammad Nazzal,

member of Hamas Political Bureau, saying that the Palestinian national reconciliation has reached a dead end because of the Egyptian pressure on Hamas to sign the Egyptian plan without taking into consideration Hamas' comments on it.

BLOCK QUOTE:

International Law Professor Hanna Issa, writing in Al-Quds under the title "Israel and Jerusalem...Impose Facts On the Ground!" opines that the peace process is facing major difficulties because of current Israeli policies. Issa believes that Israel is farther from achieving peace than at any other time. He concludes that based on Israel's policies, it is obvious that Israel will not freeze settlements, will not recognize international laws, and does not want to discuss final status solutions.

RUBINSTEIN